



## **NATIONAL MOTORISTS ASSOCIATION**

*Empowering Drivers Since 1982*

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### **Testimony for the House Commerce and Trade Committee On SB627, December 8, 2016**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for hearing the views of the National Motorists Association on this bill.

SB627 has good potential Public Private Partnership opportunities, but allowing tolls on existing roads with no legislative oversight is totally wrong in our view. HB4961 in 2010 and HB4925 in 2014 allowing toll roads without legislative oversight did not pass, in part because oversight is a critical duty legislators should not give away.

Most residents and Pure Michigan visitors would despise toll roads, but the legislature and public would be helpless to prevent them. For drivers avoiding tolls, be aware the fatality rates per mile traveled on surface roads are two to four times higher than on freeways. For safety, we want the most miles traveled on freeways because they are our safest roads.

The National Motorists Association believes SB627 should not be reported out today, but should have a lot more committee consideration on the negatives of allowing unrestricted toll roads.

The reason toll road provisions are in this bill is the failure of federal and state legislators to correct fuel taxes for inflation since the 1990s when the rates were last set. Michigan took steps to correct part of the state shortfall, and could easily correct the federal one as well. Adding the equivalent of another \$0.20 to \$0.25 per gallon would fix all the shortfalls, and gas is cheap enough now to make this a low pain result to fix our bad roads.

Mr. Pavona of the Governor's office said SB627 would not open the door for toll roads. This is simply not true. It is exactly in line with the Infrastructure Commission Report released Monday asking for a bill to authorize toll roads to prepare for a federal opportunity to use them. The Governor's press secretary said tolling is not viable in Michigan, but that comment is a polar opposite to the Infrastructure Report. The Administration statements downplaying toll roads conflict entirely with their insistence on passing SB627 to authorize them.

We urge you to not report out SB627, because Michigan should not have toll roads. We do need more revenue to fix our bad roads, but not with all the negatives toll roads would bring to our state.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Walker for the National Motorists Association, representing the users of our roads